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MEMORANDUM

TO : DP/TPE via DSY/TPE
FROM : CSY/UDN
SUBJECT: DEBRIEFING OF PISIDHI INDRADAT

DATE: 14 April 1967

REF. No. UDN/CSY/C67-2A

The attached is a statement by INDRADAT relative to other Air America employees in his company while interned in Laos.

Original. Signed By
LESLIE D ASHE

Leslie D. Ashe
Chief of Security

I. Summary

On 3 September 1963 I was one of 7 crewmen flying in Air America C-46 No. 150 dropping rice over Laos. Suddenly at about 1635 hours the aircraft was hit by ground fire which caused the right engine to catch fire. CHERRY, the American aircraft captain, ordered the crew to bail out. I was the first to bail out. As I was in the air I saw 4 other parachutes coming down. I also saw the aircraft crashed and assumed the other 2 crew members were still in the plane at the time it crashed.

About 1 hour after I was on the ground I was captured by Pathet Lao troops. They took me to a village not far from where I landed. At this village, Ban Na Seng, Muang Pin area, SVKT Province, I met three of the other crew members, T. C. TO, Chinese First Officer, Eugene DEBRUIN, AFS, and Prasit PROMSUWAN, AFD. They had been captured before me and brought to the same village.

The three of us were confined in one of the village huts for the night and the next day we were moved to Tha Khong Prison. Here we met Prasit THANKEE, AFD, who had also been captured. We stayed here together for 79 days.

In the months to come we were moved to various prisons in SVKT Province. We stayed in Tha Khong Prison for 79 days, Ang Kham Prison 17 days, and Muang Pin Prison 100 days. We were then moved to Lang Kang Prison in Kham Muang Province where we stayed together for 90 days.

On 3 June 1964 we all escaped from Lang Kang Prison but we were recaptured on 6 June 1964 and brought back to Lang Kang Prison. We remained together there until 21 June 1964 when we were moved to Thaphachon Prison for 12 days, then to Ban Tham Prison for 90 days, then back to Thaphachon Prison again. We were later taken back to Ban Tham Prison where we remained together until December 1965.

In December 1965 we were all moved to a new prison at Khunee Village where we stayed for about 90 days. In March 1966 we moved to Hany Bat Prison where we stayed until 30 July 1966. On this day we made our second escape.

It was the plan of our second escape to split into 3 groups. DEBRUIN and TO were to go to a nearby mountain and attempt to signal a friendly aircraft, PROMSUWAN and THANKEE were to follow a nearby river and reach the Mekong River, and I, travelling alone, was to attempt to follow another stream and reach the Mekong River.

I walked for 37 days alone before I was captured again. After being recaptured, I was kept in many prisons alone until 7 January 1967 when the Ban Na Sen Prison, Kham Muang Province, where I was confined was overrun by friendly forces and I was rescued.

After being recaptured on 6 September 1966, I never again saw or heard anything regarding the other Air America employees with which I had been confined. Furthermore, other than the four AAM employees with which I was confined, I never saw or heard anything regarding other Air America employees who might be in unfriendly hands.

II. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

The following is physical health description of the persons who were confined with me:

1. Y. C. TO

During the first year of confinement TO experienced no noticeable physical hardships. During the last 2 years he said many times that he had a high fever and he felt weak. I believe he possibly had Malaria at this time. He lost quite a lot of weight and became very skinny. His face turned pale and yellow. Also his eyes turned yellow. When he became sick, he would often shake and feel cold.

TO's stomach never seemed to bother him throughout the confinement. Many times, however, he complained about the toothache. His gums were very sore, several of his lower molars were decayed, and he could not chew his food. On the last day I saw him on 30 July 1966 he was very sick with high fever. On this day his gonads were also swollen very badly. They were both about the size of a large orange and TO found it very difficult to stand, sit, or walk. He also frequently complained of headaches.

2. Eugene DeBRUIN

Practically all the time I was with DeBRUIN, he experienced dysentery. Sometimes this was very severe. When he had bowel movements, frequently only blood appeared. He would also bleed at night when he slept. He also frequently had high fever and would shake with cold chills. His teeth became very bad. He lost his four front teeth, 2 upper and 2 lower, and most of his remaining teeth were decayed. His gums were frequently sore and he could not chew.

DeBRUIN could not adjust to eating the kind of food we were given. He lost a considerable amount of weight and became very skinny. One time he fainted and another time he had a fit which I believe was due to his weakness.

When we were captured, the guards took DEBHUIN's eye glasses, which were of a strong prescription. This seemed to bother him for about 6 months but after that he adjusted and could see better.

3. Prasit FROMJUAN

FROMJUAN mainly was troubled with dysentery. Near the end of our confinements, prior to the 30 July 1966 escape, he experienced dysentery so acute that he sometimes had bowel movements 15 times in one night. During this time he passed nothing but blood and mucus. He was in such pain, everytime he experienced a bowel movement, he thought he was going to die. After this he lost a lot of weight and became extremely skinny. He also lost two of his front teeth and his gums became very swollen and caused him much pain.

4. Prasit THAMKE

THAMKE was very healthy and had a big strong body when we were first captured. His body later became very thin and skinny since he never seemed to get enough to eat. He also contracted Malaria and experienced high fever and chills. His face and body turned pale and yellow.

THAMKE experienced the usual amount of dysentery but it was not too serious compared to the others. He had very bad pain from two decayed lower molars. He could not stand the pain and he tried time and time again to extract them himself, but he was never successful. If he chewed anything for a long time, he would get a severe toothache which would keep him awake all night. On the last day I saw him he also had a high fever and became tired very easily.

All of us frequently experienced stiff and sore muscles. We also always had a number of marks left by leeches on our lower extremities. Sometimes these caused minor infections but this was not considered serious compared to other ailments.

III. MENTAL CONDITION

In my opinion we all maintained very good spirits and comradship during the time of our confinement. We tried to make jokes everyday which diverted our thinking from our plight.

However, frequently each of us would drift into a depressed state when we thought too much of our loved ones and homeland. We would usually end up crying to ourselves. No one ever gave up the idea of escape.